

THE CLEARING HOUSE OF MISERY

PAUL WEST

OUTSIDE the railroad station at Evian-les-Bains they had gathered together, a group of some 50 or 60. They were women and children, with a scattering of old men. Each bore a tag printed in German and with a large number on it. Some carried bundles, others were empty-handed; their clothing was nondescript. Their faces were drawn and pinched in the evening sun that came over the waters of the lake of Geneva, and the children among them clung to the knees of the women in that pitiful, frightened way so many children of France have of doing these days.

Inside the station I could hear the Chasseurs Alpins, three drummers and three buglers, loudly playing "Le Savoyard." There were some cheers as the band, leading the main body of the convoy which had just come in from Switzerland, marched out through the station to join the group I was watching. Great canoes of the American Red Cross stood waiting to receive the infirm among them. Otherwise it was very quiet, not at all the scene I had expected to find here.

There were some women and children in the group who fascinated me by their dazed, hopeless expression—the still, numb way in which they stood, almost trembling, it seemed to me. I turned my camera toward them to take a picture, when, as they caught sight of my action, there was a cry from them. A very old woman raised her shriveled hand and tried to hide her face from the lens. The children shrunk further into the folds of their women folks' skirts, and an old man gasped: "For the Prussian! He is going to send our pictures back to the Prussians, and they—!" A Red Cross nurse at my side explained that I did not wish to do any such thing—that they were safe back in France, their France, again, and that the Prussians could never touch them. She pointed to the arch across the street, a few feet away, through which they would soon pass, with the motto in big scrawly letters, "Soyez les Bienvenus."

She explained that I was an American. They seemed to understand, and their faces lighted up, for this was in early June, and even these pitiful ones, who had been where little news had reached them for nearly four years, knew that the Americans were in France in good numbers now, and were their allies.

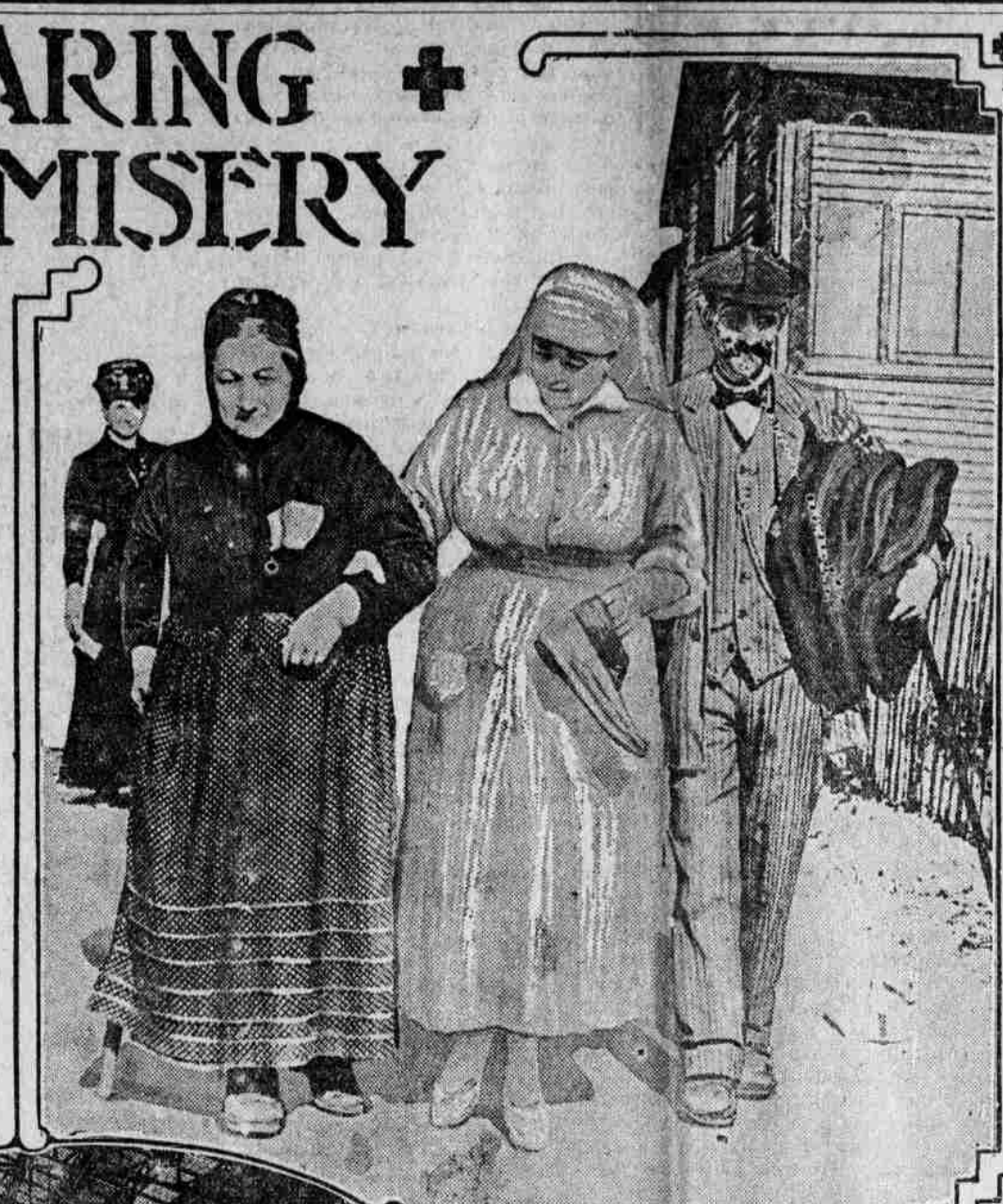
So the group ceased to shrink from my camera. A woman even thrust her child forward and smoothed its hair so that it would look well in the picture. But, just as I was about to snap the shutter, another woman in the group, standing a little back, looked at me with an expression that was full of condemnation, full of appeal, as she said: "Yes, my friends, let us stand up straight, so that he can get a good photograph of misery!" Then she laughed bitterly, and I—well, I did not take the picture.

At this moment the rest of the convoy began to come out of the station, led by the Chasseurs' little band. With them came Red Cross men and nurses, carrying or helping those who could not walk into the waiting cunions and ambulances. I put up my camera and hurried ahead to reach the casino, whither the procession was bound, before their arrival there. Someone struck up "La Marseillaise," some woman with a high, shrill voice. As I climbed upon the front seat of an ambulance and we started to pass the crowd I thought for a moment that I was now going to see, going to hear, what I had come up from Paris for—the glad burst of enthusiasm, of happiness from these people now that they fully realized that they were in France, among their own, free from the German yoke, which had lain on their necks since 1914. But as our ambulance went by the procession there were no other voices raised to join that of the singing woman, and after a few bars she, too, stopped singing and the procession went on, silent, shuffling, except for some small boys, town boys, who trudged ahead of the Chasseurs, still playing their tune on drum and bugle.

I reached the casino ahead of the procession and waited at the door for them to come down the Rue du Casino. The narrow, steep street was crowded along its sidewalks with townspeople, and from windows was flung the tricolor, while the American flag waved here and there, too. As the procession came around the head of the street the people hailed it with cheers and the waving of flags. The Chasseurs played more loudly—now it was "Vive l'Armee" they were tooting. A few of the children raised their heads and looked with glad eyes at the enthusiastic natives who were trying so hard to cheer them home. An old man in the procession straightened up and shouted, "Vive le General Joffre." But otherwise there were no cheers, no thrills of happiness, nor anything but just that down-bent attitude, that shuffling walk, that dazed, whipped, cowed expression. It was, as the woman at the station, had said, misery. For Evian is the clearing house of misery these days.

It was not so at first, the American Red Cross doctor told me, and so the subject of the department of the Haute-Savoie also assured me.

"Which is why we make such a great effort to cheer them as they come in nowadays," he said. "They are crushed, these people; they are like dead men and women, and the children, even the little ones, are scarcely alive to the situation. Free from Germany once more? They cannot believe it—there is scarcely enough strength left in their poor minds and bodies for them to be able to understand."



AMERICAN RED CROSS WORKER ASSISTING REPATRIATED FRENCH CITIZENS TO SECURE CLOTHING



RETURNING EXILES IN RAILROAD STATION AT EVIAN



ANAEMIC CHILDREN ON BALCONY OF EVIAN HOSPITAL

rection, but I do not think she saw me at all, or saw anything. Her face was blank for a moment, then, as in looking aside she nearly collided with someone ahead of her, she shrank from him with a sort of cry, as if she had expected to be beaten down.

We followed the procession into the large hall, now where the people of Evian greet these home-comers, and where, at long tables, they feed them. Over the balcony hung the flags of the allies, with the French and American closely intertwined. The people were placed at the tables, numbly obeying the Red Cross nurses who flitted about assisting them. They ate the food which was set before them without a word.

As they ate and drank—there were some 850 of these people—I walked about with the Red Cross doctor and studied their faces, their demeanor. Occasionally as one saw us he or she smiled, but for the most part it was like walking through the halls of an asylum for the mentally deficient—the eyes were dazed, the expression empty, vacant.

By now some young women had passed among the crowd giving to each a little French flag. I noticed a boy of about twenty, tall, well put together. The girl had to thrust the flag into his hand and explain to him what it was.

"That boy hasn't always been an idiot, I would say offhand," said the doctor at my side. "He looks beaten, whipped. That's the sort they are sending back to us, nowadays."

The boy still holds the flag, looking at it as if trying to recall where he had seen that combination of colors before. I recollected that he would have been about fifteen or sixteen when the war broke out, when he, with these others and so many thousands like them, were caught in that first southward rush of the German horde through the towns of northern France.

The subprefect was mounting the platform to speak to the diners. The Chasseurs played their tunes loudly. The subprefect began to talk to them, he told them they were safe among their friends once more, that never again would they be slaves of Germany, that homes would be found for them and an effort made to find the friends and relatives whom they had not seen nor even heard from for four years. He told them that France soon would conquer, that she was now joined by America with her millions of young men, and then he gave the signal for the band to start the "Marseillaise." This it did.

As the first notes were heard some of the faces lighted up. There was an effort to sing the wonderful song, and after a fashion it succeeded. But though before the refrain had been finished there were many voices hushed, many hands that could not wave the little French flag—for a moment patriotism, love of country, hope and trust had been awakened. A few minutes later I followed the Red Cross doctor into the big room where he examines every child who comes into Evian with these convoys of repatriated people. So far he

has examined nearly 50,000. I saw 280 little children examined. They ranged in age from three to twelve years, and of them all there were barely more than 50 per cent whom he could pass as being even fairly well nourished.

"They have been fed mostly on turnips and black bread for months," he explained, "and with each convoy there are more undernourished ones and more like this little fellow." He indicated a thin wisp of a boy—he was ten years of age—it was tuberculous.

This explains, furthermore, why the American Red Cross hospital, as a part of its war burden, has been obliged to extend its work into the foundation and maintenance of homes, here, there and everywhere throughout France, for these unfortunate whom Germany is sending back by the hundreds of thousands. For they are unable to work, unable to make their own homes, and the civilian population of France, bent double with the pack of its own problems, has been increasingly powerless to cope with this, Germany's insidious effort to break the morale of France.

It was all new to me when I went up to Evian from Paris to see the repatriates come in. I had heard of how Germany had begun sending them back in 1916, and how, as the numbers of them increased, the American Red Cross stepped in and undertook to look out for the sick children, finally extending its work to caring for the hundreds of tuberculous women whom Germany returned to France. But I had heard, also, of how the repatriates, sent through Switzerland by the Germans arrived at Evian, singing, kneeling down and kissing the soil of France and gladly taking up their share of their country's work in factories and on farms. I had looked for a scene of joy at the station there in Evian, for cheers and heart-thrills at the station there in Evian, for banners of welcome, here were hands and hearts open to it. But I had seen something entirely different, and when I inquired it was explained to me, "It is plainly," I was told, "part of the German plan of breaking down French morale, of destroying the efficiency of the American Red Cross, which it has learned is doing such a large part in the work of handling repatriates."

"At the same time that Germany is hurling her big shells into Paris by day and air raiding it by night; at the same time that she is driving refugees by the thousands from their homes in towns along the line of her proposed advance; at the same time she is filling the hospitals with wounded French and American soldiers, taxing the equipment of the American Red Cross to the limit, as she believes, she has tried a new trick during this offensive."

"If this is not so, how can it be accounted for that each succeeding trainload of repatriates is larger, contains more sick and completely used up individuals than the previous one? How can you account for the large number of young women with babies born in Germany since they were taken there—babies whose fathers may be German, but whose identity will ever remain a mystery—which are unloaded on us every day?"

Even at that it seemed rather a difficult task. These people who were coming in—I saw several trainloads of them—seemed such hopeless things. What could be done with them? What a burden they would be on the French! How little result there would be from anything done for them or with them!

"That is far from being the case," I was told. "They respond in an incredibly short time to all we do for them. Their health improves, their minds clear. From being liabilities they soon become assets. Germany sends these people in, wrecks, so cowed, so starved, that they can scarcely tell where they have been, what has happened to them in the years of their slavery in the mines, the mills, the fields of their captor country. Tuberculosis seems to have a firm grip on many of them, and the children are filled with the germs of contagious diseases. But either by happy ability of the French to rise under difficulties, or the joy of finding themselves back in their own land, the rapidity with which they rally, the quickness with which their minds clear, is remarkable."

A French woman, in charge of the casino vestiaire at Evian, where clothing is found for these unfortunate, said: "The more they send, the better we like it. We can care for all, with the help of our friends, the Americans. And the faster they send them back, though their coming so fast unquestionably taxes our resources to the utmost, the more quickly will France get back her own people."

GOOD-BYE BACKACHE, KIDNEY AND BLADDER TROUBLES

For centuries all over the world GOLD MEDAL Haaren Oil has afforded relief in thousands upon thousands of cases of lame back, lumbago, sciatica, rheumatism, gallstones, gravel and all other affections of the kidneys, liver, stomach, bladder and allied organs. It acts quickly. It does the work. It cleanses your kidneys and purifies the blood. It makes a new man, a new woman, of you. It frequently wards off attacks of the dread and fatal diseases of the kidneys. It often completely cures the distressing diseases of the organs of the body allied with the bladder and kidneys. Bloody or cloudy urine, sediment, or "brickdust" indicate an unhealthy condition.

Do not delay a minute if your back aches or you are sore across the loins or have difficulty when urinating. Go to your druggist at once and get a

box of imported GOLD MEDAL Haaren Oil Capsules. They are pleasant and easy to take. Each capsule contains about one dose of five drops. Take them just like you would any pill. Take a small swallow of water if you want to. They dissolve in the stomach, and the kidneys soak up the oil like a sponge does water. They thoroughly cleanse and wash out the bladder and kidneys and throw off the inflammation which is the cause of the trouble. They will quickly relieve those stiffened joints, that backache, rheumatism, lumbago, sciatica, gallstones, gravel, "brickdust," etc. They are an effective remedy for all diseases of the bladder, kidney, liver, stomach and allied organs. Your druggist will cheerfully refund your money if you are not satisfied after a few days' use. Answer for the pure, original GOLD MEDAL Haaren Oil Capsules. None other genuine.—Adv.

Heartburn, Belching, Indigestion, Food Repeating and Nearly All Kinds of Bodily Miseries

The first sign of stomach misery usually comes after over-eating. The doctors call it "superacidity." The people say—"sour stomach."

Millions of people who have lost their ambition, energy, courage, vitality and strength—who are weak, pale and listless—who go through life just dragging one foot after another—tired and worn out nearly all the time—nervous, irritable, subject to severe headache, insomnia, and a long train of physical ills—would be surprised, yes, dumbfounded, to learn that it is just an acid-stomach that is causing them all their misery. Yet in nearly nine cases out of ten that is just where the trouble starts.

Now a sour, acid-stomach, or "superacidity," of course, simply means too much acid in the stomach. You can now quickly rid your stomach of its excess acid. A wonderful modern remedy called EATONIC literally wipes it out. It does the work easily,

quickly and thoroughly. It makes the stomach pure, sweet, cool and comfortable. It does away with the pain, out of every mouthful of food you eat and unless you do get full strength from your food you cannot enjoy robust, vigorous health.

EATONIC is in tablet form. They are pleasant tasting—just like a bit of candy—and are absolutely harmless. Take EATONIC and find out for yourself how wonderfully different you will feel. See how quickly EATONIC banishes the immediate effects of acid-stomach—Acid, Heartburn, Belching, Food repeating, indigestion, etc. See, too, how quickly your general health improves—how much you relish your food—how much more easily your food is digested—how soundly you sleep—how nervousness and irritability disappear. And all simply because, by taking EATONIC, you have rid your stomach of a lot of excess acid that has been holding back and making your life miserable.

So get a big box of EATONIC from your druggist today. He is authorized to guarantee EATONIC to please you and you can trust him to make this guarantee good. If EATONIC fails in any way, take it back—he will refund your money. If your druggist does not keep EATONIC write to us direct and we will send you a big box and you can send us the box after you receive it. Address: H. L. Kramer, Pres.,

160 ACRE FARMS IN WESTERN CANADA FREE

coming to farmers from the rich wheat fields of Western Canada. Where you can buy good farm land at \$15 to \$30 per acre and raise from 20 to 45 bushels of \$2 wheat to the acre it's easy to make money. Canada offers in her provinces of Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta

160 Acre Homesteads Free to Settlers

and other land at very low prices. Thousands of farmers from the U. S. or their sons are yearly taking advantage of this great opportunity. Wonderful yields also of Oats, Barley and Flax. Mixed Farming is fully as profitable an industry as grain raising. Good schools; markets convenient; climate excellent. Write for literature and particulars as to reduced railway rates to Supt. Immigration, Ottawa, Canada, or to

W. S. NETHERY, Room 82, Interurban Sta. Bldg., Columbus, O.
Canadian Government Agent

Get under the Shower of Gold

Toasts and Roasts.

At a little luncheon recently held by a mutual admiration club, the following toasts were proposed:

"His highness, the hetman of Ukraine! Hurrah! Hurrah! Hurrah!" —Kaiser Bill.

"His majesty, the German kaiser! Hoch, hoch, hoch!"—General Skoropadski of Ukraine.

Such outbursts of impassioned eloquence and expressions of undying fealty will probably go thundering down the ages and cause even President Wilson to shake in his shoes—with laughter.

Catarhal Deafness Cannot Be Cured

by local applications as they cannot reach the diseased portion of the ear. There is only one way to cure Catarhal Deafness, that is by a constitutional remedy. HALL'S CATARRH MEDICINE acts through the blood on the mucous surfaces of the system. Catarhal Deafness is caused by an inflamed condition of the mucous lining of the Eustachian Tube. When this tube is inflamed you have a rumbling sound or imperfect hearing, and when it is entirely closed, Deafness is the result. Unless the inflammation can be reduced the tube restored to its normal condition, hearing may be destroyed forever. Many cases of Deafness are caused by Catarrh, which is an inflamed condition of the mucous surfaces. ONE HUNDRED DOLLARS for any case of Catarhal Deafness that cannot be cured by HALL'S CATARRH MEDICINE. All Druggists & Co. Circulars free. F. J. Cheney & Co., Toledo, Ohio.

Recognized.

Private Butler (former press agent doing sentry duty)—Halt! Who goes there?

Private Leggett (former reporter)—Halt! Joo, could you slip me two on the aisle for Monday night?

Private Butler—Pass, send it—Buffalo Express.

Personal Salutation.

Edward, just before getting in bed, said the usual good night to the various members of his family. As he hopped into bed his mother heard him talking.

"What are you saying?" she asked. "I just said 'good night' to," he announced.

RARE COIN GIVEN TO MUSEUM

New York Institution Has Confederate Half Dollar, Only Four of Which Were Made.

The museum of the Numismatic society in New York has received a gift of probably its rarest coin. This is the famous Confederate half-dollar, of which but four were made, and two only are known to exist.

In the early days of the Civil war the Confederates, when they took New Orleans, seized all government property, which included the United States mint. What coins there were on hand, of course, were used. The silver bullion was also melted into United States coins with the dies then there. The question then came up of a distinctive coinage for the Confederacy. A die was made for the reverse of the 50-cent piece, showing a Confederate shield and the legend, "Confederate States of America." The obverse side of the old United States half-dollar, showing a seated figure of Liberty surrounded by 13 stars, dated 1861, was to be used in conjunction with the new die.

Four pieces only were struck, probably to submit to the high officials in Richmond. No more pieces were ever struck, as the supply of bullion had run out, and during the life of the Confederacy no sufficient amount of bullion was ever obtained to strike any silver coins.

Inconsistency.

"Did you ever notice," queried the almost philosopher, "that a man will stick his hand out to see if it's raining and then become peeved if he catches a drop on it?"

This is a wide world, but a lot of people in it live on a narrow margin.

When Your Eyes Need Care Try Marine Eye Remedy

No Stinging—Just Eye Comfort. 50 cents a bottle or send. Write for Free Brochure. MARINE EYE REMEDY CO., CHICAGO